

# Headstart Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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**Unique reference number** EY217824  
**Inspection date** 06/08/2009  
**Inspector** Anne Barnsley

**Setting address** South Road, Bourne, Lincolnshire, PE10 9LU

**Telephone number** 01778 393925  
**Email** ssjenkin@aol.com  
**Type of setting** Childcare on non-domestic premises

## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of the registered early years provision. 'Early years provision' refers to provision regulated by Ofsted for children from birth to 31 August following their fifth birthday (the early years age group). The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and welfare, known as the *Early Years Foundation Stage*.

The provider must provide a copy of this report to all parents with children at the setting where reasonably practicable. The provider must provide a copy of the report to any other person who asks for one, but may charge a fee for this service (The Childcare (Inspection) Regulations 2008 regulations 9 and 10).

The setting also makes provision for children older than the early years age group which is registered on the voluntary and/or compulsory part(s) of the Childcare Register. This report does not include an evaluation of that provision, but a comment about compliance with the requirements of the Childcare Register is included in Annex B.

## Description of the setting

Headstart Nursery is a privately run provision which has been operating since 1994. It is one of a group of four nurseries in Lincolnshire. The nursery operates from a two storey building situated within a short walking distance of the town centre. There is an enclosed outdoor play area attached to the premises. The nursery serves the semi-rural community and surrounding villages. The nursery is accessed at ground level and there is ample parking provided for staff and parents.

A maximum of 80 children in the early years age group may attend the nursery at any one time. Of these, 21 children may attend the out of school club. The nursery is open each weekday from 07.30 until 18.00 for 51 weeks of the year, closing for all bank holidays and the Christmas week. There are currently 127 children from six months to 11 years on roll. The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register and both the compulsory and voluntary part of the Childcare Register.

The nursery employs 15 permanent members of staff and four additional bank staff to provide cover. All of the staff, including the manager have appropriate early years qualifications for their role. Some staff are working towards higher qualifications. The nursery receives support from the local authority.

## Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is satisfactory. Staff have a generally sound awareness of how to implement the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and provide an environment in which all children are included. As a result the needs of children are mostly met well and they make steady progress in their learning. Staff work well with parents, and other relevant agencies to ensure that they have sufficient knowledge of children's specific care and learning needs. The environment and resources do not fully promote all areas of learning as there are some limitations as to what is on offer and how the environment is presented to children. The nursery manager uses self-evaluation and accesses relevant external advice to help evaluate the effectiveness of the provision to promote on-going improvement.

## What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the early years provision the registered person should:

- provide equipment and resources that are sufficient, challenging and that can be used in a variety of ways, or to support specific skills both indoors and outdoors
- ensure that the learning environment is well maintained
- ensure outdoor and indoor spaces, furniture, equipment and toys are safe and suitable for their purpose with specific reference to providing a suitable outdoor baby area and appropriate shade.

To fully meet the specific requirements of the EYFS, the registered person must:

- organise staffing arrangements to ensure safety and to meet the needs of children in the baby room (Suitable people).

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## **The leadership and management of the early years provision**

Children are safeguarded as two senior members of staff have completed child protection training and all staff are conversant with the safeguarding procedure and their duty of care towards children. Required records are kept regarding individual children, for example, relating to parental contact details, and children's health, dietary and cultural needs. This helps staff to meet children's individual care needs safely. Staffing levels are organised to ensure that the required adult to child ratios are adequately maintained overall throughout the nursery and in the event of unexpected staff absence. However, staffing is occasionally not well-organised to best meet children's individual needs in the baby room. For example, the regular checking of sleeping babies, which is good practice and to be commended, occasionally leaves an insufficient number of staff on duty with the babies who are not sleeping. Supervision levels are considerably reduced and, as a result, the safety of the children is compromised. Ensuring the effective deployment of staff was raised as a recommendation at the last inspection. Although staff throughout the nursery have been re-deployed to address this and some improvements have been made, the recommendation has not been fully met due to this situation. An action has been raised accordingly to address this immediately due to its potential seriousness. The security and safety measures that are in place keep children safe and all adults are appropriately vetted to ensure that they are suitable to be in close proximity to children.

The new management has taken adequate steps through the use of self-evaluation to address the remaining recommendations satisfactorily and to make continuous improvements. Accessing relevant local training and the input of local authority advisors has ensured that staff now have a generally sound overview of the requirements of the EYFS and of how to help children learn through play and practical experiences. Staff are now establishing the use of observations and assessments in order to identify some priorities for children's future learning and to plan around children's individual needs. Regular planning meetings take place with all staff to share ideas about providing appropriate activities. Links with other settings that children attend have been established, which enables staff to more effectively assess any gaps in children's learning and monitor the effectiveness of what they provide. Staff recruitment procedures continue to ensure that staff are appropriately qualified and experienced for their role and are aware of the expectations of the nursery. They all participate in an induction process and work for a probationary period before being employed on a full-term contract. Staff are responsible for reading all policies and procedures and for completing annual appraisals that identify any training and development needs. They are assigned to key groups of children to provide children with continuity of care.

Improved information is now gathered from parents about their child's development and learning needs. Parents are more fully involved in their child's learning through activities that are sent home and through systems that welcome their ideas and suggestions and strengthen links with the home and nursery. Overall, the partnership with parents is now good as they are kept well informed through their children's 'Learning Journeys' and parent's evenings, and through the information they receive and are asked to provide. Customer care calls are made to parents to seek their views about the provision and any suggestions that are made are acted on by staff, for example, creating a new changing area for children in the toddler room.

Improvements have been made to specific records, for example the safeguarding procedure has been updated, staff all sign in and out of the setting each day and permission to seek emergency medical treatment for all children has been obtained. Some developments have been made to improve the environment, for example windows have been fitted with safety openers to control the temperature and enable fresh air to circulate without compromising children's safety. Some progress is being made with enriching the learning environment by establishing learning zones around the six areas of learning. However, although some progress is being made in this regard, resources, including natural resources, are very limited in some areas of learning, both indoors and outdoors and the learning zones are not presented attractively or in ways that would encourage children to use them imaginatively and creatively. The pre-school room and 'Little Learners' room are not maintained in a manner that promotes a warm and welcoming environment, as many of the walls have damaged paint work and the creative room has exposed cement on the wall. The outdoor area does not have appropriate shade and there is no separate area for very young toddlers or immobile babies to play in, which reduces the amount of time they can spend outside. As a result some recommendations have been raised at this inspection to further improve the progress made to date to meet the needs of all children.

## **The quality and standards of the early years provision**

There are generally sound arrangements to maintain children's health and safety. Children are cared for in clean, warm and ventilated premises. They enjoy energetic play in the outdoor area and babies have the use of an additional sensory room. There is a balance between active learning and quieter or more restful activities, including appropriate sleep routines for toddlers and babies. Outdoors children run around and burn off energy, climb apparatus and use balancing beams to walk across. They enjoy playing with sand and containers and make up games of their own such as sliding along a low fence in a row following each other. They have a tunnel to crawl through and a play house for more imaginative or restful play. Children learn about growing vegetables and plants as they have some small growing areas and pots in the garden. One child was very keen to show the inspector the snails in the pot of lettuces and explain how they had eaten them, which he found funny. Children learn to count and can apply this to general conversations and circumstances such as being counted when lining up to come inside. One child remarked 'I am number six'. Some children use their

imaginations well from a young age such as using a funnel as a hat. Another very young child displayed a good understanding of kindness and caring for the needs of others, for example this 21 month-old-child independently helped feed a younger baby in a high chair and got the baby a drink. Children are mostly developing their listening skills well in group situations and in response to staffs' questions and instructions. They generally behave well, although some children in the pre-school room can, on occasions, become over zealous and slightly disruptive. This is mainly managed well by staff, however, children in general in this room and the toddler room need greater challenge from the resources that are currently on offer.

Babies often show interest and enjoyment in their play. For example, dancing to music and clapping hands and jumping up and down. They like pushing toys along and using others that make a variety of sounds. One baby spent quite a while banging out a beat with wooden spoons and then making a different sound on something else. Toddlers begin to develop their confidence and use their own imaginations about what they would like to do. Children in the pre-school room take this a step further when they ask staff if they can go on a bug hunt after lunch, clearly expressing their wishes. Staff take notice and agree that this is what they can do. All children show awareness of everyday technology as they operate the keys of simple electronic toys, use computers or, as seen with a baby, simply hold a calculator that has sound to their ear and listen to the noise it makes. Generally children are becoming confident and self-sufficient. They are secure with a familiar routine and with staff they know. This helps children to develop their self-esteem and confidence and enables them to start to plan their own ideas around their preferences and make a positive contribution to their learning. It also promotes skills for their economic well-being as they learn right from wrong, how to be helpful and play cooperatively and understand the different feelings from unkindness, not sharing or being left out. They learn to make comparisons about how much better it feels to be happy and how to do this for others, develop friendships and learn to respect and value each others differences.

Children are well-nourished and have a balanced diet each day with healthy snacks and hot cooked meals. They have access to drinking water to encourage them to take sufficient fluids and are learning very well about this, as even babies help themselves regularly to their drinking cups and bottles. Children develop sound hygiene practices in their daily routines, such as washing their hands before meals and after using the toilet. They begin to talk about some aspects of how to look after themselves, such as knowing what to wear to stay comfortable when playing outside depending on the weather. They rest when they are tired, either when put for a rest in the sleep room or on a cushion where they prefer. Staff respect children's home routines and liaise closely with parents to ensure that developing or changing needs, particularly with babies, are met. Diaries are used as a two-way means of exchanging information in conjunction with daily chats with parents.

## Annex A: record of inspection judgements

### The key inspection judgements and what they mean

*Grade 1 is Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality*

*Grade 2 is Good: this aspect of the provision is strong*

*Grade 3 is Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound*

*Grade 4 is Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough*

### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?</b>	3
How well does the provision promote inclusive practice?	3
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement.	3

### Leadership and management

<b>How effectively is provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?</b>	3
How effective is the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement?	3
How well does the setting work in partnership with parents and others?	2
How well are children safeguarded?	3

### Quality and standards

<b>How effectively are children in the Early Years Foundation Stage helped to learn and develop?</b>	3
<b>How effectively is the welfare of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage promoted?</b>	3
How well are children helped to stay safe?	3
How well are children helped to be healthy?	3
How well are children helped to enjoy and achieve?	3
How well are children helped to make a positive contribution?	3
How well are children helped develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	3

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## **Annex B: the Childcare Register**

The provider confirms that the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are: Met

The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are: Met